











# Hurricane Preparation

## 2005

At the traditional start of Hurricane Season on June 1st, it is always smart to review the hurricane preparation plan that you had in mind from last year. If you didn't have a plan last year, it's even wiser to sit down now and put one together for the coming season.

Hurricanes are a big concern to property and home owners in Palm Beach County. Damage caused by hurricanes can be devastating. Protecting your investment takes planning and should be completed long before a hurricane threatens.

Buildings can be damaged or destroyed by high winds, rain and flooding caused by hurricanes. There is also the added danger of wind-borne debris which can break windows and damage roof coverings and walls, allowing high winds inside a building. Once the wind gets inside, powerful uplift forces can literally lift the roof right off a building.

One important aspect of your hurricane planning is to consider in advance whether you will need to evacuate or not. If you live in a mobile home or an area that is prone to flooding during normal storms, the answer most likely is "yes." One of the factors to consider in making an evacuation decision is the rule of thumb that states you should plan "to run from water and hide from wind."

To help you determine if the area where you live might be flooded, the County has provided a Web site called **Surge Area Mapping System (SAMS)** which you may access from home or at a County library. At this site you can search for a map of your home by entering either your name or your street address. When the map comes up, it will depict the possibility of flooding in your area according to the various categories of a storm. For example, a Category 1 storm is the weakest but flooding information is also provided for Category 3 and Category 5 hurricanes, the latter storm being the strongest with winds in excess of 155 miles per hour.

Part of your hurricane planning that you can do right now is to check which, if any, category of hurricane would cause flooding to your home and whether you need to consider an evacuation when that intensity of a hurricane is predicted. It's up to you to start planning now to protect yourself and your family.

**Please visit the following Web Sites for additional critical Hurricane information.**

- Palm Beach County - [http://www.pbcgov.com/hurricane/hurricane\\_prepare05.htm](http://www.pbcgov.com/hurricane/hurricane_prepare05.htm)
- FEMA - <http://www.fema.gov>
- National Hurricane Center - <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>
- Florida Disaster Center - <http://floridadisaster.org>
- PBC, Surge Area Mapping System— <http://www.pbcgov.com/pubsafety/eoc/SAMS.htm>

We welcome your feedback and input. If there is a specific topic of interest you would like us to cover in our next Newsletter, please e-mail requests to Dorine Kelley, Manager, Customer Relations, at: [dkelley@co.palm-beach.fl.us](mailto:dkelley@co.palm-beach.fl.us)